

30 November 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence  
THROUGH : Director, Basic and Geographic Intelligence  
THROUGH : Chief, Geography Division [REDACTED] STATSPEC  
SUBJECT : Evaluation of the Senior Seminar

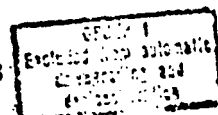
Principal Conclusions

1. During the past nine and a half weeks of my participation in the Senior Seminar I learned more about the range of Agency activities and problems than I have in the past decade. I feel this broader understanding has equipped each of the Seminar members to contribute more intelligently to the re-adjustments that the Agency and the Intelligence Community is being required to make. My experience leads me to strongly recommend continuation of the Seminar in generally the same format as the pilot run.

Detailed Comments

2. As the above paragraph indicates, I am now an enthusiastic supporter of the Senior Seminar. More accurately, I should be categorized as a convert for I entered the Seminar with a degree of skepticism and a basic question as to whether OTR had not gone overboard in developing this extensive course.

3. That skepticism has been completely dissipated. I found the course to be soundly conceived, carefully planned, and well implemented. The briefings, tours, and the candid supplementary discussions among the Seminar members successfully cut through the parochial and security barriers that normally hinder communication within and between the various offices of the Agency. I had been previously aware of many of the Agency's extensive activities and current problems, but a considerable number of others were partially or completely filtered out. The Seminar provided a mind-stretching exposure to the entire spectrum of programs, to the effects of budget cuts and personnel reductions, and to the program and management re-adjustments of the Agency and the Intel-



ligence Community demanded by the President, Congress, limitations on [REDACTED] and on-coming systems.

4. Speakers from within and outside the Agency exposed us to a diversity of viewpoints. The inside speakers increased my respect for the professional capabilities of the personnel of other offices and dissipated -- or in some cases strengthened -- the stereo-type impressions which we inevitably acquire to some degree. The speakers from the outside were generally of high caliber, but in my view sometimes less balanced and less candid; nevertheless they served their function of effectively presenting important current points of view. The Seminar speakers and readings put into somewhat sharper focus the changes on the domestic and foreign scene that will require serious Agency attention, if not major re-adjustments of intelligence programs, e.g., in the fields of economic intelligence and covert action. Definitive answers to our problems were, of course, rarely available, but an increased consciousness and additional insights were developed. The net effect was to pull me out of the rut of the narrow regional and topical specialization of my daily work assignment and to revitalize my interest in the rest of the world. I feel all the Seminar members were sensitized to the challenges the Intelligence Community faces and hopefully also to the opportunities for effecting long-needed changes which could not be implemented without the current pressures to improve intelligence management and operations. The briefings as to the extent to which some management tools have already been developed in OPPB and NIPE were especially illuminating at this time.

5. The Seminar had some deficiencies, but I feel that they were all basically minor. For example, there was no exposure to DIA or NSA. If the Seminar is repeated, efforts should be continued to find effective spokesmen from these two organizations. Past US intelligence successes were analyzed, and our failures were subjected to considerable soul-searching criticism, but an integrated analysis of the current tactics of foreign intelligence organizations was lacking. The principal insights on this point came from the comments of the Seminar members.


6. The length of the course was just about right. The only change I would recommend is a minor extension to a full ten weeks, probably by expanding the block on the Business of Intelligence, where the pace was at times too rapid for effective absorption and discussion. In my opinion, going beyond ten weeks

would reach the point of diminishing returns. Any reduction to less than eight weeks would adversely affect the Seminar's capability to achieve its major objectives.

7. The course is unquestionably expensive! It ties down twenty senior Agency officers and a considerable training staff, puts additional demands on the time of top Agency managers and other government speakers, and requires funds for outside speakers. Even in past periods of relatively abundant resources, the conservative side of my make-up would have had some doubts about the value of such an expensive course -- but that opinion was in the context of the relatively stable conditions that prevailed in the Agency and the Intelligence Community. With the present changing environment I feel the need for such a Seminar, which prepares twenty senior Agency personnel to contribute more effectively to the day-to-day decision-making process, is especially critical -- even though resources are tighter. If I were given an option of nominating an Agency individual for either the Senior Seminar or a Military College, I would unhesitatingly recommend the former by a wide margin. Except in those instances where Agency personnel specifically need to develop strong contacts with the military, the return per unit of time is so much greater.

8. I therefore feel the course is worth its cost, and every effort should be made to maximize the number of Agency personnel who are exposed to this type of training by scheduling two, and if feasible even three, sessions per year. If the Seminar is continued, I would also recommend that the initial classes be restricted to Agency personnel. Not only does the Agency need to take care of its own critical needs first, but the presence of non-Agency personnel would also constitute a damper on the free discussion of Agency problems that the pilot run was able to achieve.

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